

Building Great Communities in the Bay Area and Beyond



The Time is Now

The San Francisco Bay Area has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to stop poorly planned growth and reinvest in our existing communities. In the past 10 years, Bay Area voters have approved \$12 billion in new mass transit investments. This investment will add 100 new stations to the region's existing transit system. Our regional transportation authority has awarded grants to dozens of cities to refocus development around new and existing public transit infrastructure. And now, with a groundbreaking new law SB 375, regions throughout California will be expected to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by creating more walkable, transit-oriented communities. These factors create an opportunity to dramatically change the

trajectory of growth and create a range of environmental and equity benefits for communities across the region. But this change will not happen by itself, or in a backroom. Our region will only live up to its incredible potential if we deeply engage residents in local planning while providing the regional tools and resources that will make this paradigm change feasible.

A New Model for Change

Our goal is for all people in the Bay Area to live in complete communities, affordable across all incomes, with nearby access to quality transit by 2030.

To achieve this vision, we have developed a unique partnership of community foundations and transportation, environmental, housing, and social equity groups. Together, we work in individual communities to create regional change.

Engaging Local Communities

In 25 communities around the region, the Collaborative is not only changing how cities choose to plan their growth, but also how those decisions are being made. Through partnerships with grassroots organizations, we work intensely with low-income communities and communities of color to ensure new land use plans and developments meet the needs of people of all income levels, as well as regional health and environmental goals.

The Collaborative provides tools and resources to: assess local community needs; educate residents on the opportunities and benefits of locating new growth near transit; and provide technical assistance and trainings so residents have a strong voice in shaping the future of their communities.

We offer communities a range of tools and technical assistance, including:

- Affordable housing strategies and policy recommendations;
- Communications assistance;
- Community tours and outings;



Success in San Leandro: Over 100 residents and Great Communities allies packed the San Leandro city council chambers in 2007 to support approval of the Downtown Plan, which increased the number of homes allowed in the downtown area from 500 to 3,500. We kept working with the city, and in 2009 won approval of the city's first multi-family affordable housing for very low income families in twenty years.

- Community health existing conditions data and analysis;
- GIS mapping;
- Great Communities toolkit;
- Housing needs assessments;
- Leadership development trainings;
- Planning document analysis; and
- Traffic generation modeling.

By combining these tools with local knowledge and organizing power, we are refocusing city growth away from sprawl and towards a new model of sustainable and equitable development near transit.

Reshaping the Region

To create lasting change, our work reaches beyond local communities. The Collaborative is working on a regional level to reshape the Bay Area's policy framework for growth.

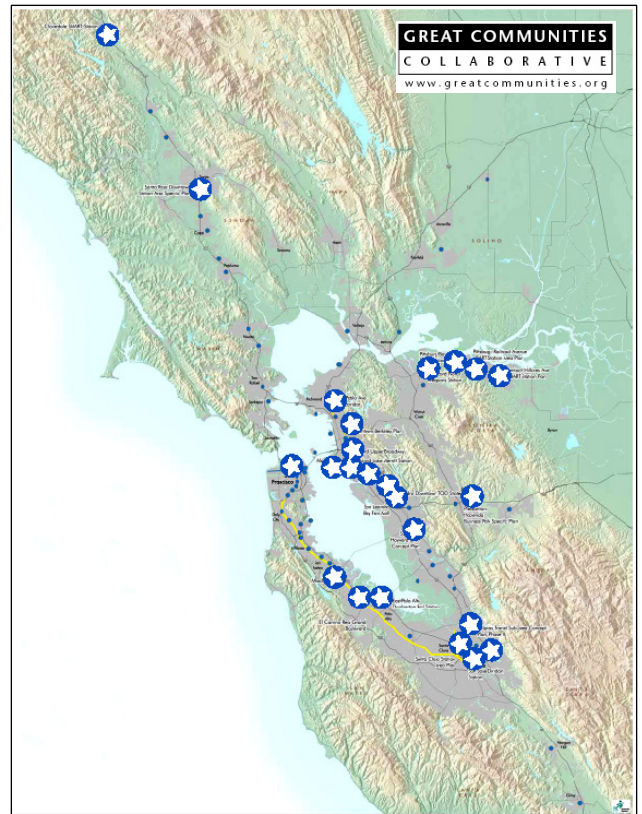
Organizations in the Collaborative have won landmark regional policies to tie good land use planning to transit infrastructure through identification of Priority Development Areas in urban infill locations across the region. Now, cities must plan for smart infill growth before regional money will be invested in new transit infrastructure.

The Collaborative hosts regular convenings of local and regional decision-makers, including a monthly Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) dinner series and an annual TOD Marketplace. These events bring speakers from around the country to speak on best practices and develop regional leadership to move the Bay Area in a bold new direction for growth and sustainability.

In 2008, California passed SB 375, which requires regions to develop new Sustainable Community Strategies that will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions through integrated transportation and land use planning. The Collaborative is working with leaders throughout California to set a strong reductions target for the state while ensuring our region creates a robust strategy that meets both reductions targets and the housing needs of all segments of the population.

Sharing the Collaborative Model

By coordinating the work of experts and organizers at a regional scale, and creating the tools for deep community engagement in local planning efforts, the Collaborative is dramatically increasing support for sustainable, equitable development. Through presentations and convenings, we are sharing this model to help colleagues in other regions build a movement to create Great Communities across California and the nation.



Regional Impact: Since 2006, the Great Communities Collaborative has worked in 25 communities throughout the Bay Area.

Who We Are

The Great Communities Collaborative began in 2006 as a unique partnership of community foundations, regional non-profits, technical experts, and local grassroots organizations to promote sustainable and equitable development near transit.

Collaborative Core Partners:

- TransForm
- Greenbelt Alliance
- Urban Habitat
- The Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California
- Reconnecting America
- East Bay Community Foundation
- The San Francisco Foundation
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

For more information: Visit www.greatcommunities.org
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